

Q What is being done to help the elderly?

A Many of the provisions in the food stamp regulations were designed to benefit the elderly. Examples of these provisions are:

- Allowing interviews by telephone or in their home rather than at the DSS office.
- Authorizing someone else to turn in their application for food stamps, be interviewed, pick up their EBT card and shop for them.
- A two-year certification period.
- Allowing the purchase of meals in a communal dining facility, from a meal delivery service or FNS-authorized restaurants with their food stamp benefits.
- Exemption from work registration.
- Entitlement to unlimited shelter deduction and to a medical deduction for expenses greater than \$35 per month.

Individuals receiving SSI who live alone or purchase and prepare food separately from other household members and have no earned income may receive food stamp benefits through the South Carolina Combined Application Project (SCCAP). For information on SCCAP, call toll-free 1-800-616-1309.

Households where all members are elderly or where all elderly members purchase and prepare food separately from the other household members and no member receives earnings from work may receive food stamp benefits through the Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP). For information on ESAP, call toll-free 1-800-616-1309.



Who do I
call for help?



Call toll-free
from anywhere
in South Carolina.
Food Stamp Hotline
1-800-768-5700
In Columbia call
898-7435

The South Carolina Department of Social Services hereby agrees that it will comply with Title V, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 794) "No otherwise qualified handicapped individual...shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

DSS Brochure 2422 (AUG 04) Edition of OCT 03 is obsolete.

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Q What is the Food Stamp (FS) Program?

A The purpose of the Food Stamp Program is to promote the general welfare and to safeguard the health and well-being of low-income households by raising their level of nutrition. People who qualify will receive a plastic card which they can use at stores to access their food stamp benefits.

Q What can be bought with food stamp benefits?

A Food stamp benefits can be used to buy almost any food or seeds or plants to grow food for that household's own use. Food stamp benefits cannot be used to buy: alcoholic beverages, tobacco or cigarettes, household supplies (including soap and paper products), medicines or vitamins, any other non-food item, hot foods prepared for immediate consumption or pet food.

Q Who qualifies for food stamps?

A Person(s) who live together and buy and prepare food together, and who have combined countable incomes less than the amount set by the federal government for a household size in the Thrifty Food Plan may qualify for food stamp benefits. For elderly and/or disabled persons, the income limit is higher. Households are allowed certain deductions from their income. In addition to income, other eligibility factors may include resources available and

participation in work programs.
Note: A person receiving SSI may be automatically eligible for food stamp benefits.

Q What deductions are allowed?

A In the 48 states, other than Alaska and Hawaii, the following deductions are allowed:

- a) Standard deduction. The standard deduction will be adjusted once a year to reflect changes in the cost of living.
- b) Earned income deduction. Working household members will be able to subtract 20 percent of their gross earned income from their earnings. This is to allow for taxes and other mandatory deductions, such as Social Security.
- c) Dependent care deduction. Households will receive a deduction for the cost of child or incapacitated adult care when necessary to enable a household member to work, seek a job, or pursue training or education in preparation for a job.
- d) Excess shelter costs. Households will be able to subtract monthly shelter costs, which include rent, mortgage payments, interest, property taxes, insurance and utility costs.

Q What amount of resources are counted in the Food Stamp Program?

A If your household is considered categorically eligible, your resources will

not count. If you are not categorically eligible, the total value of combined countable resources cannot be over \$2,000 or, if at least one household member is aged 60 or older, the limit is \$3,000. Examples of countable resources include bank accounts, stocks and bonds, property you own that is not where you live, and some vehicles.

Q Does everyone have to register for work?

A In general, all able-bodied unemployed household members between 18 and 60 years of age must comply with work registration requirements.

Q What are the responsibilities of food stamp recipients?

A Recipients must report any changes in place of employment, pay rate, employment status, source or amount of monthly unearned income if more than \$50, household composition, address, resources, or receipt of a Social Security card within 10 days. Failure to do so may cause them to be dropped from the program. Recipients must not knowingly change, transfer or sell their food stamp benefits, or acquire or use them in an unlawful manner, or they will risk a fine or jail.